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## EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

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In 2008, the History Graduate Student Association at Northern Illinois University organized its first departmental conference with the intent of providing masters and doctoral students an opportunity to share their work in a formal, collegial environment. Since then, this annually-held event has grown to include dozens of participants and honored guests from universities as far away as California and Germany. In May 2012, the conference committee issued a call for papers from students interested in publishing their work. Following an overwhelming response, members of the History Graduate Student Association and a team of faculty advisors reviewed these submissions and based their selections upon a rigorous process. This publication commemorates half a decade of success, which culminated on October 26, 2012 with the Fifth Annual History Graduate Student Conference at Northern Illinois University.

As editor, it is my pleasure to introduce the four distinguished papers chosen to represent the Fifth Annual Conference in this volume. For the opening article, initially presented in an unforgettable panel on identity and conflict in the antebellum South, Matthew Costello's "The Bones of Washington" provides a fascinating story of Virginia's conflict with the federal government over George Washington's remains—and the impact it had upon the sectional crisis. The conference also featured a vibrant panel on Atlantic revolutions. In Heather Freund's "Revolutionary Networks in the Age of Revolutions," readers will find transatlantic connections and ideological continuities in the causes of Lafayette, Paine, and Kosciuszko. The final two papers were presented in concurrent panels on the burgeoning field of human rights. In "Pierre Bayle and Human Rights" Robert Fulton argues that scholars must look to the seventeenth century and Bayle's literature on *la liberté de la conscience* to find the antecedents of religious tolerance and rights consciousness. Robert Glover's "The Case of Dr. Louis E. Schmidt," meanwhile, examines the concept of equitable medical treatment as a human right in early 20<sup>th</sup> century America. The History Graduate Student Association hopes you find the following articles as enjoyable and invigorating to read as we have.